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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/998,895	11/30/2001	Joan C. Teng	OBLX-01033US0	4164

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Burt Magen
Vierra Magen Marcus Harmon & DeNiro, LLP
685 Market Street, Suite 540
San Francisco, CA 94105-4206

EXAMINER	
RUTLEDGE, AMELIA L	

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
2176	

DATE MAILED: 03/25/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/998,895	TENG ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Amelia Rutledge	2176	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on *30 November 2001*.

2a)☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b)☒ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) *1-33* is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) *1-33* is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☒ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a)☒ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a)☐ All b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

1.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date *3/15/04,4/26/02,*.
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ .
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

1. This action is responsive to communications: original application filed 11/30/2001.

2. Claims 1-33 are pending. Claims 1, 14, and 24 are independent claims.

Specification

3. The lengthy specification has not been checked to the extent necessary to determine the presence of all possible minor errors. Applicant's cooperation is requested in correcting any errors of which applicant may become aware in the specification.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. **Claims are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hardy et al. (hereinafter "Hardy"), U.S. Patent No. 6,073,242 issued June 6, 2000 in view of Howes et al. (hereinafter "Howes"), Understanding and Deploying LDAP Directory Services, copyright 1999, Netscape Communications, Macmillan Computer Publishing ISBN 1-57870-070-1.**

DETAILED ACTION

1. This action is responsive to communications: original application filed 11/30/2001 claiming a foreign priority date of 12/22/2000.

2. Claims 1-33 are pending. Claims 1, 14, and 24 are independent claims.

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6. From the specification, a *workflow* is understood as "a process that is implemented by the Identity System (or other system) and automates the business methods" (p. 2, l. 17-20). A *domain* is understood as "a logical grouping of Web Server host ID's, host names, URL prefixes, and rules" (p. 16, l. 5-6).

Independent claim 1 cites: *A method for using workflows, comprising the steps of: associating workflows with domains in a data structure, each domain identifies a portion of said data structure*;

While Hardy teaches a method for using workflows (Col. 8, l. 41-45), Hardy does not explicitly teach the steps of associating workflows with domains in a data structure, However, Howes teaches a process of associating workflows with domains and apportioning data structures (Ch. 9, Topology Design, p. 277-292). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine the workflow method of Hardy with the process of Howes, so that the user would have the benefit of simplified workflow processing and control over user roles.

receiving a request to perform a task that pertains to said data structure; and Hardy teaches receiving a request to perform a task, in this case, a request to send external email (Col. 5, l. 18-21).

performing a first workflow for said task, said first workflow is associated with a *first domain that includes a target of said request.* Hardy teaches a method of performing a workflow for a task where the authority server determines the email name and key from the target domain, performs lookups, and performs steps of a workflow including appending letterhead and signature, and encryption (Col. 5, l. 15-33). Note

that while this method refers to email, Hardy points out that the invention can be applied to other problems including workflow, which are similar in method to the email example and are therefore not described in depth (Col. 8, l. 43-45).

Claim 2 cites: *A method according to claim 1, wherein: said step of associating includes associating said first workflow with said first domain,*

Hardy teaches an authority application which coordinates communications and encompasses all applications that make use of the authorities (Col. 9, l. 35-49). While Hardy does not explicitly teach the step of associating the first workflow with first domain, Howes teaches a process of associating workflows with domains and apportioning data structures (Ch. 9, Topology Design, p. 277-292). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine the workflow method of Hardy with the process of Howes, so that the user would have the benefit of simplified workflow processing and control over user roles.

said step of associating said first workflow includes choosing a first entry in said data structure,

Hardy teaches a method to be applied to using workflows (Col. 8, l. 43-45) where the authority application employs the user directory to resolve user references to system references (Col. 10, l. 9-13).

said data structure is a hierarchical data structure, said first domain includes said first entry and entries below said first entry.

While Hardy does not explicitly teach a hierarchical data structure, Howes teaches a case study for directory services deployment where a directory is designed with a

hierarchical namespace with entries below a first entry (p. 707-708). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine the authority application of Hardy with the hierarchical data structure taught by Howes so that the users would have the benefit of a namespace based on organizational hierarchy, to promote future extensibility of the system.

Claim 3 cites: *A method according to claim 2, wherein: said step of performing includes identifying one or more workflows associated with said target.*

Hardy teaches a method of identifying applications associated with the target (Col. 9, l. 35-39) and associations of classes of users with applications (Col. 10, l. 41-63).

Claim 4 cites: *A method according to claim 1, wherein: said request includes an identification of said target;*

Hardy teaches a process of receiving a request from a user to send external email to a destination identified by nickname, an identification of the target (Col. 5, l. 15-33).

said step of performing includes identifying a set of one more workflows that perform said task and are associated with domains that include said target, said set of one more workflows includes said first workflow.

Hardy teaches identifying a set of applications which make use of or authorize the enterprise authorities of the users and a server which provides client/user directory services using LDAP (Col. 9, l. 35-49). Thus the applications are associated with domains, including the target identities. Because the set of applications taught by Hardy includes all applications which make use of enterprise authorities, the set of workflows includes the first workflow.

Claim 5 cites: *A method according to claim 4, wherein: said request is a request to delete said target.*

While Hardy does not explicitly teach a delete request, Howes teaches a delete operation (p. 102). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine Hardy with Howes so that the user would have the benefit of a system with full access to operations available from the LDAP directory service and the corresponding functionality.

Claim 6 cites: *A method according to claim 4, wherein: said request is a request to modify said target.*

While Hardy does not explicitly teach a modify request, Howes teaches a modify operation (p. 102-105). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine Hardy with Howes so that the user would have the benefit of a system with full access to operations available from the LDAP directory service and the corresponding functionality.

Claim 7 cites: *A method according to claim 1, wherein: said request includes an identification of said target; and*

Hardy teaches a method which can be applied to using workflows, where the authority server receives a request with an identified target (Col. 5, l. 15-21).

said step of performing includes the steps of: identifying a set of one more workflows that perform said task and are associated with domains that include said target, said set of one more workflows includes said first workflow,

Hardy teaches an authority application which controls all exercise of enterprise authorities by the users, i.e., identifying a set of workflows associated with domains (Col. 9, l. 35-49).

reporting said set of one more workflows,

Hardy teaches the use of databases which in response to a request by a user asking the authority application to perform a particular communication or transaction, the application determines the user's role and then processes the transaction in accordance with enterprise policy (Col. 11, l. 48-64). Hardy teaches a user data structure employed by the directory service to map user references to system references (Col. 13, l. 14-44), i.e., reporting a set of workflows available to the user identity.

receiving a selection of said first workflow, and performing one or more steps of said first workflow. Hardy teaches an example of the workflow method where the selection of the first workflow is received, and one or more steps are performed (Col. 13, l. 24-44).

Claim 8 cites: *A method according to claim 1, wherein: said step of performing includes identifying workflows for said task, identifying domains associated with said workflows for said task, and receiving a selection of said first workflow.*

Hardy teaches a method of identifying applications associated with the task (Col. 9, l. 35-39) and associations of classes of users with applications, i.e., domains (Col. 10, l. 41-63). These applications require the intercession of the authority application, i.e., receiving a selection of said first workflow.

Claim 9 cites: *A method according to claim 1, wherein: said steps of associating, receiving and performing are performed by an integrated identity and access system.*

Hardy teaches an authority server that supports the implementation of role-based enterprise policies for expressing and exercising authority and the projection and transfer of those authorities over networks of communicating electronic systems (Col. 3, l. 23-37).

Claim 10 cites: *A method according to claim 1, wherein: said request is for self-registration.*

Hardy teaches a method of self-registration for external users (Col. 14, l. 26-61).

Claim 11 cites: *A method according to claim 1, wherein: said request is from a parent workflow; and said first workflow is a sub-workflow to said parent workflow.*

Hardy teaches a method of using workflows, an example of the method where an email application attaches an indication to an outgoing email message (Col. 10, l. 1-13). The email application is the parent workflow, the attachment function is a sub-workflow to the parent workflow.

Claim 12 cites: *A method according to claim 1, wherein: said data structure is a hierarchical data structure; and each domain identifies an entry in said hierarchical data structure and additional entries below said entry.*

While Hardy does not explicitly teach a hierarchical data structure, Howes teaches a case study for directory services deployment where a directory is designed with a hierarchical namespace with entries below a first entry (p. 707-708). It would have been

obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine the authority application of Hardy with the hierarchical data structure taught by Howes so that the users would have the benefit of a namespace based on organizational hierarchy, to promote future extensibility of the system.

Claim 13 cites: *A method according to claim 12, wherein: said hierarchical data structure includes an LDAP directory.*

Howe teaches the case study for directory services deployment utilizing a hierarchical data structure in the book Understanding and Deploying LDAP Directory Services, and it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention that the hierarchical data structure included an LDAP directory.

In regard to independent claim 14, claim 14 reflects the processor readable storage device(s) having processor readable code used to perform the method as claimed in claim 1, and is rejected along the same rationale.

In regard to dependent claims 15-23, claims 15-23 reflect the processor readable storage device(s) having processor readable code used to perform the method as claimed in claims 2, 3, 4, 7-9, 11-13, and are rejected along the same rationale.

In regard to independent claim 24, claim 24 reflects the apparatus used to perform the method as claimed in claim 1, and is rejected along the same rationale.

Claim 26 cites: *An apparatus according to claim 25, wherein: said step of performing includes identifying one or more workflows associated with said target and entries in said hierarchical data structure that are above said target.*

Hardy teaches a method of identifying applications associated with the target (Col. 9, l. 35-39) and associations of a target with applications (Col. 10, l. 41-63). Hardy teaches requests by a lower level authority server for access to system resources controlled at a higher level (Col. 21, l. 19-43).

In regard to dependent claims 25, 27-33, claims 25, 27-33 reflect the apparatus used to perform the method as claimed in claims 2, 4, 7-9, 11-13, and are rejected along the same rationale.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Amelia Rutledge whose telephone number is (571)272-7508. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:30 - 5:00 Monday - Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Joseph Feild can be reached on (571) 272-4090. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

AR

JOSEPH FEILD
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER